Developing the role of the Physician Associate

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Supporting the development of Physician Associates across Kent, Surrey and Sussex
Overview

PAs in practice
A day in the life of a PA
Imbedding PAs into the clinical team
Supporting PAs- employers and supervisors perspective
The potential of the role
Our story...

• Began with PA students

• 13 PAs appointed

• Most of our PAs in post >2yrs
Where do PAs work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult Medical</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Surgical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cardiology</td>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>Breast Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care of the Elderly Dermatology</td>
<td>Emergency Medicine</td>
<td>Colorectal Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endocrinology</td>
<td>General Practice</td>
<td>Neurosurgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gastroenterology</td>
<td>Acute medical/clinical</td>
<td>Orthopaedic Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Internal Medicine</td>
<td>decision units</td>
<td>Otolaryngology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Health</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spinal Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haematology</td>
<td></td>
<td>Trauma and Orthopaedics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infectious Diseases</td>
<td></td>
<td>Urology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lymphoedema</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vascular Surgery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychiatry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Medicine</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Respiratory Medicine</td>
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Paediatrics
- Critical Care
- General Paediatrics
- Paediatric Surgery
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PAs working in Secondary Care

Clinical
- Patient reviews
- Family meetings
- Clerking
- Clinic
- Theatre

Clinical Procedures
- bloods, cannulas, ABGs, pleural tap, chest drain, LP, ascitic tap, ascitic drain

Organisational/Leadership
- Induction of junior doctors
- PA/Medical student teaching
- Morbidity & Mortality
- Audit
- Leadership projects
- Departmental meetings
- Safety leads
- Culture champions
What do PAs do at SASH?

**Geriatrics**
- CGA assessments, OPALS assessments, ward rounds, cognitive assessments, on call duties

**Orthogeriatrics**
- NOF# bleep carrier, ward reviews, post op reviews, falls clinic

**Cardiology**
- ETT’s, angio sessions, ward duties, day case mx

**Respiratory**
- PE pathways, acute respiratory admissions, NIV round

**Emergency Department**
- Majors/paeds resus

**Acute Medicine**
- Each PA has sessions in acute medicine

**Surgery**
- Theatre sessions, CEPOD, Out patients, clinic

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Supervision

Relationship is key
Experienced supervisors
Mapped job plans
Day to day supervision by juniors (Core trainee/StR)
• A day in the life of a PA....
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Why employ Physician Associates?

- Strengthen and add value to clinical teams
- Continuity
- Consistency
- Skill mix

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Ground work
Design phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Define your outcomes</th>
<th>Business case</th>
<th>Practicalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Skills gap analysis- are PAs the right people to help?</td>
<td>• Cost comparison for roles</td>
<td>• Who supervises?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Waiting times</td>
<td>• Reduced Locum spend</td>
<td>• Job planning-SPA allowance?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Patient experience</td>
<td>• Demand versus supply (workforce demands)</td>
<td>• Add on costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trainee feedback</td>
<td></td>
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Ground work: Prior to employment

- **JDs**
  - Job templates
  - FPARCP
  - NHS Jobs
  - Recruitment events
  - Links with Universities

- **Advertising**
  - Clear job plan
  - AfC band 7
  - Recognised PA course (accreditation)
  - MVR members
  - Indemnity

- **Interviews**
  - Ideally with PA
  - Check credentials
  - Consider fit with supervisor/organisation

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Prepare your teams- PR work!

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Trainee survey 2017 at SASH

- 67 respondents from FY1 to StR
- 52% have/had worked with a PA
- 67% felt the role needs defining at induction
- 54% felt PAs were limited by lack of prescribing/requesting x-ray

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• Myth busting
• Most doctors have not worked with PAs...yet

• “My experience so far is a lack of clarity regarding what they are and aren't supposed to be able to do” FY1

• “their role and responsibilities need to be defined more clearly, for both the doctors and the PAs” ST3
How do we tackle this?

• Not all PAs are the same
• Base in a team and not in isolation
• Set clear boundaries and make them known
• Rigorous governance process
• Repeat this process for each new intake
• Ensure fair and equal opportunity for all
“I worked with a PA during my weekend on ward cover, it made the process run smoothly, I was able to get through the whole jobs list, she was a wonderful help and made everything so much easier, I was able to assess many more patients.” ST3

“In general PAs are very useful, provide continuity, understand how the department works and can assist with logistical problems. In general very capable clinically, taking pressure off the rest of the team” CMT
### Effect on training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Significantly improved</th>
<th>Some improvement</th>
<th>No impact</th>
<th>Some reduction</th>
<th>Significantly reduced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to attend internal teaching</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to learn procedures</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall educational experience</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Gain support from your CD, Medical director and CEO
Have a PA champion
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Development

QI/Audit/Research

Education

Extended procedures

Specialist skills

Competency framework
• UK evidence

Well received by patients

Work safely at level similar to trainee

Increased consultant productivity

Increased continuity within the team

Positive impact on patient flow

Restrictions perceived as adding time needed from supervisor

Ref: 8,9,10
NIHR funded study

Investigating the contribution of physician associates (PAs) to secondary care in England: a mixed methods study (HS&DR - 14/19/26)

NIHR website: https://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/projects/141926/#/

Study website http://pa-scer.info/

Twitter account @PA_SCER

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• Review question:
  What is the impact of Physician Associates on patients’ experience and outcomes, service organisation, working practices, costs and other professional groups for the secondary care specialties of acute medicine, care of the elderly, emergency medicine, mental health and trauma and orthopaedics?

• The review protocol

• Progress
  Review complete; write up currently in progress
To keep PAs keep them motivated and allow development

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Meet Dan...

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• Meet Michelle....
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The value of a PA is realised over time

Invest time and effort in the job and the PA

Think creatively about what PAs can do for your service and your patients
PAs are not a miracle cure for workforce issues

They can be part of a solution of matching skill mix to demand

PA numbers are expanding and role awareness is essential
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